# SHORTTAKES

On the Cover: Virginia Bluebells



Virginia bluebells along Rock Creek in Bethesda

Especially abundant west of the picnic area along the Red Trail at Susquehanna State Park, the Virginia bluebell (*Mertensia* 

*virginica*) is one of the first wildflowers to appear in winter's wake.

You can identify this native plant before it blooms by its cool green, baby spinach-like leaves. The flowers consist of five fused petals that create a downward trumpet-like bloom. The purple buds occur in clusters along the stem, reaching a maximum height of 2 feet.

Virginia bluebells are *ephemeral* — meaning they only bloom once for a short period of time — so get out and start searching early this spring! They attract butterflies and bumblebees as pollinators, making them a key species for insect viewing.

Remember, these wildflowers call the park home, so please leave them where you find them and do not take any flowers with you.

dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife



2015 Photo Contest

accepting entries through August 31

ENTER ONLINE OR BY MAIL

Learn how at

dnr.maryland.gov/photocontest

# Spring into Park Endurance Races

Looking forward to warm spring days? The team at Wye Island Natural Resources Management Area in Queen Anne's County sure is! Sign up now for the 4th Annual Wye-Tri Adventure Race scheduled for Sat., May 2, 2015.

Open to anyone 14 years of age or older in good physical health, the race begins with a 2-mile trail run, continues with a .75-mile paddle and concludes with a 6.5-

# CATEGORIES

Male over 40, Male under 40, Female over 40, Female under 40, Two Person Teams (16 years and older), and Adult/Youth

SIGN-UP COSTS \$20 per person, \$30 per team

Call Park offices for more information.

Wye Island 410-827-7577 Tuckahoe 410-820-1668 mile mountain bike ride. Each participant will receive a souvenir event shirt.

Kayaks and canoes of all sizes are permitted, and a limited number of vessels will be available to rent for an additional \$5. Life jackets are mandatory.

The Wye-Tri will be held rain or shine but may be delayed or interrupted in the event of extreme fog, wind or thunderstorms. Participants must have their kayaks and bicycles in place by 7:30 a.m. and attend a pre-race meeting at 7:45. The race begins promptly at 8:00.

Just a few weeks later on June 6, Tuckahoe State Park hosts its annual Triathlon. A reduced registration rate is available for participants who sign up for both events.

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Mapping Made Easy

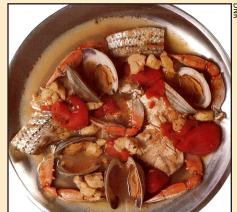
Maryland's Environmental Resource and Land Information Network — MERLIN — now hosts the official DNR Trail Atlas, which includes public land trails, water trails and access sites. The Atlas layers reflect the most up-to-date and comprehensive trail data available for

e and the entire state, and will continue to RLIN receive real-time updates to provide Trail users with the most accurate and trails, complete information. Planners and Atlas citizens can use this online resource to make customized maps for recreational e for or planning purposes.





Seafood Nicole



Serves 4-6

## **Ingredients**

3 pounds rockfish

48 littleneck clams

½ cup Italian olive oil

2 large cloves garlic, chopped

1 large onion, chopped

1 tablespoon oregano

2 teaspoons chopped parsley

salt and pepper, to taste

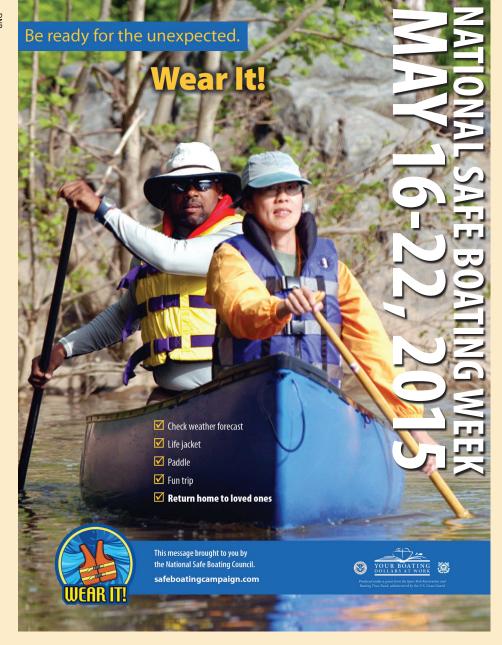
1 cup dry Vermouth

110 oz can Italian Plum tomatoes, crushed

## Instructions

Wash and dry fish. Cut fillets into thirds or quarters. Scrub clam shells thoroughly. In a 6-quart saucepan, over medium heat, warm oil until hot. Add garlic, onion, oregano, parsley, salt and pepper. Cook until onions are brown. Add Vermouth and tomato. Cook for 45 minutes, stirring frequently. Add fish and clams. Simmer for about 45 minutes.

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